

## **Preparing for a Winter Storm**

### **Preparing Your Home for a Winter Storm**

- Develop a Family Disaster Plan and Supply Kit (See Section 2.2 – 2.4).
- Check your supply of heating fuel. Fuel carriers may not be able to deliver during heavy snow.
- Have a qualified serviceman clean and check your furnace.
- Have an emergency source of heat;
  - Fireplace or wood-burning stove with plenty of wood
  - Portable kerosene heater
- Winterize your home:
  - Insulate walls and attic.
  - Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows to reduce wind drafts.
  - Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic film from the inside.
  - Follow precautionary steps to safeguard against your water pipes freezing.
    - ❑ Disconnect all gardening hoses and install covers on all outside faucets.
    - ❑ Keep your house temperature at 68 degrees or higher, even if you're leaving the house for an extended period.
    - ❑ Open cabinet doors below sinks to allow heat from the home to circulate.
    - ❑ Identify the location of the main water valve and the valve on your water heater.
    - ❑ Wrap pipes nearest exterior walls and in crawl spaces with pipe insulation or with heating tape.
    - ❑ Service snow-removal equipment.
    - ❑ Have chimney and flue inspected.

## **Preparing Your Car for a Winter Storm**

Winterize your car:

- Have a mechanic check and winterize your car before the season begins.
- If indicated, use snow tires or chains.
- Keep the fuel tank at least half-filled during the winter to prevent water from getting into the fuel and causing the engine to stall.
- Systematically check antifreeze and windshield washer fluids and oil levels.
- Keep a windshield scraper and small broom for ice and snow removal.

Carry a winter storm car kit – particularly when you are traveling any distance during the winter. This should include:

- Blankets or sleeping bags to keep you warm
- Flashlights or signal light with extra batteries
- Extra clothing, especially caps, mittens, and overshoes
- High-calorie nonperishable food
- Bottled water
- Compass and road maps
- Knife
- First aid kit
- Shovel
- Sack of sand
- Windshield scraper
- Booster cables
- Two tow chains
- Fire extinguisher
- Transistor radio with extra batteries
- Tools: pliers, screwdrivers, adjustable wrench
- Flares
- Necessary medications
- Empty coffee can with plastic cover to use as a toilet

*Adapted from resource material developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service*